

# RELATIONS BETWEEN EDUCATION AND SOCIOECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN MOZAMBIQUE<sup>1</sup>

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## Introduction

This paper aims to reflect critically on the relationship between research in education and socioeconomic development from Mozambique. To do so, we would like to return to an issue posed by the Chilean biologist Humberto Maturana (2002, 11) in his book *Emoções e Linguagem na Educação e na Política*: “Does current education serve Chile and its youth?” This question resembles those posed by Mozambican philosophers José Castiano (2005), who when reflecting on *As Transformações no Sistema de Educação em Moçambique* asks: “Educate for what?”, and by Severino Ngoenha (2000, 199), who, when reflecting on the *Estatuto e Axiologia da Educação*, asks: “What education for Mozambique?”

So, like Ngoenha (2000), Maturana (2002) and Castiano (2005), we also ask: does current education serve Mozambique and its youth? What is education for in Mozambique? What kind of education does Mozambique need? What do we want from education? What is it and what do we want to educate? What country do we want? As you can imagine these questions are

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not easy to answer, the complexity of them demand research in the field of education in the country. It is therefore on this element “investigation” or “research” in education that we will focus in the following pages, seeking to discuss the (in)possibilities of their relationship with socio-economic development, another complex and difficult concept of treatment by the multiplicity of understandings and controversies surrounding it.

Establishing the relationship between research in education and Mozambique’s socio-economic development entails researching on one’s own research in education – What is it? How to do such an investigation? How to approach this object of study that we call education? It is also a question of what socio-economic development means in the context of Mozambique. To this end, we have had to resort to some of the existing literature on education in Mozambique. One aspect that we do not ignore and which we deem important in this process of research on education research in this context is the history<sup>4</sup> and the trajectory of education in the country. These, from our point of view, are fundamental to understand how research in education can contribute to Mozambique’s socio-economic development today. Thus, like Humberto Maturana, we think that:

... it is not possible to think of education without, or at the same time, thinking of this thing so fundamental in everyday life that is the country project in which our reflections on education are inserted (Maturana 2002, 12).

In this way, the question that arises is: what country project do we have? Or rather, as Maturana (2002, 12) puts it, “do we have a country project?” If we have a country project, it does not seem very explicit. From the point of view of the discourse the objective is to develop Mozambique and eradicate absolute poverty, but from the point of view of financial and human resources and the daily practice of governmental management there is a difficult institutional response to these challenges.

For the accomplishment of this article we used as a working method bibliographical research on education in Mozambique, the exchange of ideas and conversations, the sharing of texts and perceptions of the realities of the countries where we live. The writing was done in the collective platform *google docs*, which allowed to observe the process of construction of the text

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<sup>4</sup> The story as Miguel Buendía Gómez (1999, 15) argues can help to understand the reason for the new present.

in real time. The wiki and hypertext construction in two different types of Portuguese was a challenge that is certainly expressed in the writing result.

Education being one of Frelimo's governance priorities since 1975 and formally considered by the Mozambican government "as a human right and a key instrument for the consolidation of peace, national unity and for the country's economic, social and political development through training of citizens with high self-esteem and patriotic spirit"<sup>5</sup> (Plano Estratégico da Educação 2012, 11), it "needs to be thought in its entirety and within the framework of concrete conditions, in order to identify the dysfunctional moments of the current system, in relation to reality and the social fabric" (Ngoenha 2000, 199). For this, the research in education is fundamental.

However, in order to rethink the issue, we need to reconstruct the history of education in Mozambique, especially in the short periods analyzed and invisibilized, but, above all, "to seek the theoretical basis for projecting in this area a future that surpasses the colonial education project and the time of the construction of socialism, whose substratum, despite some institutional and cosmetic reforms, continues to govern the whole of our educational system" (Ngoenha 2000, 200).

Taking into account the historical dimension means looking at the multiple realities in which education subscribes (cultural, economic and political<sup>6</sup>) and, therefore, not seeing it as a closed study object in itself, because the educational field is structurally conditioned by those dimensions that, without fully constituting education, influence it (Ngoenha 2000, 200).

Our argument in this work is based on the assumption that if socio-economic development means the improvement of people's living conditions (Ngoenha 2000, 203) then research in education, understood as a social production influenced by socio-historical and renovating conditions of the latter, is called upon to contribute to their transformation and improvement (Goergen 1998, 5).

<sup>5</sup> It is curious and we are struck by the fact that no reference is made to the idea of a liberating education, that for Fiori (1967, 11) "is incompatible with a pedagogy which, in a conscious or mystified way, has been a practice of domination".

<sup>6</sup> According to Ngoenha (2000, 200) the cultural dimension of the educational phenomenon occupies the first place to the extent that it has its substrate in socially instituted values and norms, that is, to the extent that the whole education project is dependent on the project of society in which it operates. Secondly, the economic dimension insofar as the "quantity and quality of educational structures depend very much on the financial capital that the State and the people are able to invest in this domain" and thirdly, the political dimension of education on which the institutional organization of the educational field depends.

Ngoenha (2000) sees in the last 80 years of the history of education in Mozambique varied objectives, teaching systems and pedagogical methods. The official education system aimed at the Portuguese elite, indigenous schools aimed at those who contributed to the legitimization of the regime, Christian systems with opposing and favorable positions to the regime, Marxist systems aimed at the formation of the new man, liberal systems imposed by the World Bank, aimed at the capitalist ideological formation, private systems directed to the formation of the bourgeoisie, among others.

In the post-independence period there was a curricular change and the number of children that had access to schools increased, although the structure was the same in terms of classrooms and teachers (Ngoenha 2000). From 1986, under determinations from the World Bank, which finances the Ministry of Education (MINED), it restructures the system that starts to go through ambiguities between the education policy that needs to be equated with local/regional and global policies imposed by the structural adjustment programs.

Many experts and social movements denounce the consequences of structural programs and their development models and their implications for the impoverishment of the so-called Third World countries. The values of Mozambican education have resulted from the determinations of these institutions without much questioning (Ngoenha 2000). The result of this is that:

Mozambique forms in our universities agronomists that do not do field work – which are being occupied by Boers – but they occupy places in the offices; our architects do not improve the housing conditions of Mozambicans who live in inhumane conditions, but they do an aesthetic architecture [...]; one teaches a Portuguese Law – still old-fashioned – that has nothing to do with how people live and understand their collective life; management and computer courses are introduced, a medicine that integrates very little traditional medical knowledge – much appreciated in European universities –, social science research responds more to the imperatives of the Western world than to the real needs of the people they are supposed to serve with their studies and work, etc. For what and for whom do schools, high schools and universities serve? (Ngoenha 2000, 29-30).

In the 1995/1999 Government Program for the Education sector are evidenced the intentions of the Mozambican state to “guarantee peace, national stability and unity, reduce absolute poverty levels, aimed at eradicating them in the medium term and improving people’s lives, with an impact on education, health, rural development and employment” (MINED 1995, 11), which are fundamental to revive economic and social activity that can eliminate poverty and promote economic and human development.

The development concept defended in the document is based on the knowledge and application of science and technology where scientific research is a fundamental instrument for the discovery of the most appropriate technologies to Mozambique. It also lists the measures needed to achieve these assumptions (MINED 1995, 11-12), how to promote research capacity (with the necessary human resources and institutions for research for development); encourage scientific research and apply its results in the priority areas of economic and social development; promote exchanges between different sectors, promoting the debate on science, technology and development; cooperate with regional and international science and technology institutions, and coordinate government policies at regional and international levels.

In the preface to the Strategic Education Plan (PEE<sup>7</sup>) (MINED 2012, 13), education is considered as of fundamental importance for the socio-economic return of individuals, families and the nation and has been a priority in national and international development policy agendas: “Education is, by excellence, a crucial tool for fighting poverty, a healthier life, for sustaining economic growth, and for strengthening democracy and the participation of all citizens in national agendas.”

The PEE (MINED 2012) announces that improving the quality of education for the teaching-learning process will have as a priority “greater integration of students in the academic process, which includes teaching, research and extension activities”, followed by consolidation of the reforms proposed in the Strategic Plan for Higher Education 2000-2010, with emphasis on the implementation of the National Framework for Academic Qualifications of Higher Education. It also includes institutional capacity (physical conditions and new technologies), quality of teacher training (establishing partnerships and research programs and teacher exchange programs). Among the measures is to promote in HEIs a research culture with local, national and international relevance.

For Cruz e Silva (2015) the problem of education has a priority role for development in Africa, anchored in the reflections of Amílcar Cabral, for whom liberation is a cultural act that requires knowledge of concrete reality and education and science are privileged processes for the development of peoples. He also recalls the thinking of Aquino de Bragança, who frequently questioned the role of the sciences and social scientists and advocates a theoretical production that is not “extroverted”, “because science and knowledge need to be reflected in public policies” (Cruz e Silva 2015,

7 Portuguese acronym, *Plano Estratégico de Educação*.

269), opposing the idea of an “extraverted” science, which produces outward-looking science, concerned with pleasing the hegemonic centers of knowledge production (Hountonji 2008).

When analyzing briefly the situation of research in Social Sciences in Mozambique, Cruz e Silva (2015) offers us some clues to think the whole of research, which is a pillar to think about the educational system. She realizes that during the Portuguese colonial system researches were constrained by regime interests and most were held at the university. In the post-independence period, only one university was created, and only in 1985/86 were created two new public Higher Education Institutions (HEIs).

In the 1980s and 1990s, paradoxically, as the country opened up to democracy, some social groups, especially women, were excluded from access to HEIs, which were marked by business interests, that expanded higher education with the approval of Law 1/93 (Cruz e Silva 2015). This process resulted from the neoliberal impositions that led to the privatization of the Mozambican State:

In this line of development, education was severely affected and universities were hostage to international funding agencies. Then it is witnessed the accelerated privatization of education and the shifting of resources from public institutions to the private law sphere (Cruz e Silva 2015, 270).

These reforms demanded by the Bretton Woods agencies reflected directly in all spheres of education, and in Mozambique in higher education was evidenced the reduction of public resources that impacted the relationship between teaching and research, quantitative expansion of HEIs (in detriment of qualitative), infrastructure problems, imposition of curricular changes far from the local realities, and absence of the academic community in the processes of changes (Cruz e Silva 2015; McLaren & Farahmandpur 2002).

These contexts lead Cruz e Silva (2015) to question whether the changes in public higher education in the country meet the Mission during the creation of universities, “since the political imperatives appear above pedagogical imperatives” (Cruz e Silva 2015, 273), affronting academic freedom and to the detriment of citizen participation in the elaboration of public education policies. These barriers and constraints in relation to scientific production transform universities:

in simple reproducers of knowledge rather than producers, and a visible low quality of teaching, where the threshold of requirements is lowered (leveled below) as the growing weak quality of pre-university

education, which leads the educational system and its various subsystems to enter a vicious cycle difficult to break (Cruz e Silva 2015, 274).

Challenges include funding for research (reduced or absent), lack of infrastructure and appropriate management systems, that can lead HEIs and researchers to stick to market proposals and their research agendas. This implies, according to Cruz e Silva (2015), a loss of the institutional culture of investment in research.

## The epistemological foundations of research in education

In this item, our objective is to present some of the epistemological foundations of research in education. Let us start with the concept of research<sup>8</sup>, which we understand in general terms as an activity that consists in the search for solutions to one or several problems in the theoretical (scientific) or practical<sup>9</sup> scope. In this sense, when we talk about education research, we understand it as an activity that seeks solutions to the problems posed in this specific sector – therefore it is an action of knowledge (Borba et al. 2013), since the solution of the problem is never definitive, but always provisional, this implies a continuous search for knowledge. The research in education or educational consists of the application of a scientific perspective<sup>10</sup> in the study of the problems of education, as states Donald Ary et al:

Educational research is the application of the scientific approach to the study of educational problems. Educational research is the way in which people acquire dependable and useful information about the educative process. Educators usually conduct research to find a solution to some problem or to gain insight into an issue they do

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8 Research has long been considered an extremely important activity. Today it has gained more importance given the significant increase in the complexity of phenomena which place the compelling need for interdisciplinary work to advance one's own knowledge and allow for modifications of reality that are more appropriate to the social contexts in which one intervenes (Ludwig 2003).

9 These two scopes go hand in hand, being difficult to delimit the boundaries that separate them or where one ends and another begins.

10 By scientific perspective we refer to the study of solutions to problems using the methods, concepts and systematic theories that seek to produce in-depth knowledge, based on data to support it with consistency and that is distinct from other types of knowledge such as the common sense.

not understand. The ultimate goal is to discover general principles or interpretations of behavior that people can use to explain, predict, and control events in educational situations—in other words, to formulate scientific theory (Ary et al. 2010, 19).

Education research is generally classified into two broad categories: qualitative and quantitative. Each of these approaches employs its own methodology and terminology. The first category is concerned with the understanding of social phenomena. In this perspective, education is seen as the result of human interactions (considered subjective). The second category of research on education uses numerical measures (considered objective) to answer questions or test hypotheses. Thus, these categories of approach result from different philosophical assumptions<sup>11</sup>, which shaped the way researchers will construct research problems, produce and analyze information (Ary et al. 2010, 22).

Once the concept of research in education is defined, the following question is: what are the theoretical/epistemological assumptions<sup>12</sup> of this type of research and how is it to be realized? One of these and, undoubtedly, the first presupposition for conducting any research, is the restlessness or dissatisfaction with the explanations given to a certain phenomenon, in this case dealing with the educational field would be the dissatisfaction with the explanations offered for the understanding of the realities inherent in this particular field.

The disquiets or explanatory dissatisfactions with certain phenomena result from different epistemological perspectives, which consequently give rise to different research projects. There are projects that start from the theoretical-methodological assumption that the *real* only makes sense when it becomes *real* thinking, submitted to an abstract and conceptual treatment. In this epistemological perspective, the senses and the experience are considered as obstacles to the reliable knowledge, for the possibility of inducing to the error, not having conditions that assure the knowledge of the reality. The senses are seen as incapable of producing universal information about the real.

<sup>11</sup> Quantitative research originates from positivism, a philosophical view formulated in nineteenth-century Europe. Qualitative research in the educational field gains space in the twentieth century as an alternative to research.

<sup>12</sup> It is recurrent in educational research to assume in a non-explicit and uncritical way the theoretical and methodological assumptions that allow the activity of understanding the real. Thus, they “are taken as finished definitions already fully consolidated, which obey formulations canonically defined by the modern process of production of scientific knowledge” (Borba et al. 2008, 13)



Explanatory rationality appears as the only one capable of accounting for reality in opposition to meaningful rationality. In this perspective reason has value in itself and dispenses with any empirical evidence or experience to ensure the explanatory validity of the world, life, and man. “Reason guarantees knowledge about the real, because it protects knowledge from the misunderstandings of experience, of the deceit of the senses” (Borba et al. 2008, 13).

Other research perspectives argue that experience is the best path to knowledge. For this approach it is fundamental to abolish abstract arguments, proper to the method of deductive argumentation, and seek generalizations through empirical experience or inductive method.

The concern is with the apprehension of information about life, the world and man himself from the encounter with the objective conditions of life itself, the world itself and man himself. The sure knowledge of reality, therefore, is guaranteed by the information produced in the field of experience, with the aid of the senses (Borba et al. 2008, 13).

Perspectives also seek to reconcile the two previous ones (of reason and experience) as an epistemological alternative. For these, both reason and experience are regarded as conditions without which one does not come to the knowledge of reality. Therefore, one does not exclude the other, but rather, both complement each other.

A second assumption is that research in education should be understood as “action of knowledge”, meaning that it must be seen as a historical, social, and theoretical reality and not isolated from the context in which it is produced. This assumption is fundamental to us, since the planning of research only makes sense if we take it into account, because the research problem must have to do with the social context on which the research will be carried out. A decontextualized problem leads to the production of equally decontextualized and consequently irrelevant solutions or responses, where research loses its meaning and relevance in improving people’s living conditions. Therefore, knowledge is the main basis for conducting any research, it is no exception in research in education (Borba et al. 2008; Ngoenha 2000).

Still on the (un)contextuality of knowledge, Ngoenha (2000) argues that scientific knowledge is a characteristic of modernity, whose rationality has become the criterion and norm to evaluate all other types of knowledge. In contrast to classical science, modern science, says the author, was not only a mark of the independence and autonomy of man (*sic*), but a landmark

“of the impoverishment of the reflection of man on himself”, because he neglected the “world of life” (Ngoenha 2000, 90). Thus, modern reason based on objectivity has not been able to face the problem of subjectivity and human existence, throwing them into the field of irrationality as something denotative.

The rational model of scientific development that prioritizes the economic application of research is incapable of giving meaning to the world of life and places reason as the only acceptable measure, leading to enslavement of the human being in relation to technology and civilization (Ngoenha 2000).

Research in education must be able to overcome this perspective of the rational model in order to dialogue and value local knowledge as an alternative for building knowledge that makes sense and responds to the concrete needs of people’s lives in the contexts in which it is developed.

A third assumption of education research we would like to mention is that education is conceived as a complex phenomenon. This characteristic requires that its study uses several methods and the intersection of knowledge of different disciplines (interdisciplinarity) and concepts (intersectionality). These are just some of the fundamental assumptions of research in education, we would not take account of exploring all of them in this short space.

Regarding the question of how to do research in education, we would say that just as the approaches are diverse, the ways of doing research in education are equally so. The research can be done using qualitative (interviews, direct or indirect observation, participant, questionnaire, etc.) or quantitative methods (statistics, tabulations, samples, equations, etc.) or by combining the former with the latter (Ludwing 2003) .

## **The place of education research in the debate on the socio-economic development of Mozambique**

The concept of socio-economic development is approached from different perspectives. However, the term development is generally related to the achievement of economic and social progress by transforming the state of underdevelopment (low production, stagnation, poverty) into countries designated as “poor” or “developing” (Outhwaite & Bottomore 1996, 197) – as is the case in Mozambique.

The debate on development in Mozambique is predominantly economic, privileges a macro-economic approach, is based on statistical data and little explores the microeconomic dimension of people's daily life, ie little interest in how these decisions affect the concrete life of citizens in order to make it better. In this text, we defend the perspective that looks at development as an improvement of people's concrete living conditions (Ngoenha 2000, 203).

Understood in this way the concept of socio-economic development to offer, we believe that research in education can create huge opportunities, considering this scientific production (in the field of education) as a social production, influenced by socio-historical conditions and renovating the latter. This will lead us to understand that the practice of educational research brings with it the socio-historical reality and, therefore, is called to contribute to the transformation and improvement of it. Thus, research in education can not only be analyzed as products of certain circumstances, but also its results should be evaluated in the light of social needs and objectives (Georgen 1998, 5).

Researches on education and reflection on them should not only point to the positive epistemological characteristics of this field, but above all they must "advance towards the clarification of the connection between scientific practice and life, man's needs and activities. It is important not only to ask what the scientific production was in a given period, but also to determine its relevance to social development" (Georgen 1998, 6).

An example of the relevance of educational research for Mozambique's socio-economic development can be drawn from the argument made by Roland Brouwer, Luís de Brito and Zélia Menete (2010) in the text "Education, vocational training and power", according to which:

A national education system is one of the long-term investments that most influences the development of a nation, since it guarantees the creation of a national critical mass, reinforcing the values of conscious citizenship and, consequently, the capacity for responsible intervention of the individual and the collectivity in the pursuit of socio-cultural and economic development and environmental sustainability.

The education system also determines the relationship that arises between the citizen and the Government, giving space to a debate around the political questions in a common search for solutions of the problems that the Country faces or, on the contrary, leading to a situation in which the citizen remains silent before his Government, nourishing frustration and revolt.

To speak, therefore, of a national education system is also to speak of power or its absence, particularly when the educational system does not respond to its essential function, which is to increase the capacity of intervention of its citizens.

This capacity can only be enhanced if the education system increases knowledge in society, enhances citizens' capacity for understanding and reflection, reinforces citizenship values, and creates a culture that promotes competence and the use of knowledge and of wisdom within society.

Therefore, we present in this article an analysis of the evolution of the most important components of the National Education System (SNE), in order to identify and analyze the challenges that this evolution brings to the Country and link this analysis to the type of society we want to build and, consequently, to the educational system that provides the solid foundation needed for this construction. This is the basis for reflecting on alternative ways of thinking about education and thus proposing some issues for debate (Brouwer; Brito & Menete 2010, 273).

What we want to emphasize in relation to this argument is that investing in a national education system that guarantees the creation of a national critical mass, that reinforces the conscience and citizenship, is only possible if we invest in research in education, since this is the only one capable to help identify the elements that are pertinent to the constitution of a system that is consistent with the socio-cultural, economic and political reality of the country as shown very well by the end of the excerpt, when the authors sign that they seek to analyze the evolution of the most important components of the National Education System as a way of identifying its challenges to the country and projecting it to the type of society one wants to build. Therefore, research in education reflects the historical circumstances of its production taking into account the social relevance of its realization as we referred to paragraphs above.

Another aspect to be considered is pointed out by Osório & Cruz e Silva (2008) in discussing the predominance of the class approach in researches in Mozambique, but studies on school and gender have been systematically developed in the last 10 years, providing verification of other forms of inequality. This led to the realization that the school does not question and does not create ruptures in the structure of gender inequality, maintaining the social roles that justify the differences in access to rights by boys and girls, for example.

In this sense, the challenge is to deepen researches on education policy, verifying gender asymmetries and their commitments to the implementation of a strategy of building gender equality, not only in schools,

but throughout the social fabric as a whole, especially in the accountability of the state to elaborate, divulge and apply laws that criminalize gender violence in all spaces (Osório & Cruz e Silva 2008).

## Final considerations

The main objective of this work was to reflect on the (im)possibilities of relations between research in education and the socioeconomic development of Mozambique, that is, on the interface between these two concepts. To that end, we assume that the concepts are not self-evident, needing to be explained the meanings they assume for the authors of this work. Thus, we define education research as the application of a scientific perspective in the study of the problems of education (Ary 2010) and socio-economic development as the improvement of people's concrete living conditions (Ngoenha 2000). These are the assumptions from which we formulate our argument that research in education can contribute to socio-economic development only insofar as it is understood as a social production influenced by the socio-historical conditions and renewal of the latter (Georgen 1998) and development as the transformation and improvement of people's living conditions.

The reduction of institutional investments in research and the increasing inflow of external resources condition and shape the research agendas and the production of knowledge, leading the HEIs to a gradual decline, which lives its most seriousness today (Cruz e Silva 2015). This situation affects the objectives for which HEIs were created, especially the production of autonomous, critical, constructive, free and socially committed with the public welfare knowledge, which leads to contribute to an endogenous development project, from the realities and needs of the country and its people. "For education and science to truly occupy a privileged place as engines of change in the process of combating African countries' increasing "vulnerability" to the impacts of global change" (Cruz e Silva 2015, 275), disguised as Salvationist development projects.

Thus, we believe that for education research to contribute to the socio-economic development of Mozambique, it is necessary to invest seriously (in financial and human resources) in this component. It is necessary to create and consolidate an institutional culture of supporting educational research in HEIs, as Tereza Cruz e Silva (2015, 273) points out in her text on "The Place of Social Sciences as a Motor of Change: the Case of Mozambique". We also need to expand the approach on the educational field, which according to Ngoenha

(2000, 199) is limited to the pedagogical explanation and the analysis of the relationship between the government and international donors, “for a theoretical component that has no instantaneous election commitments, neither limiting ideological nor compromise with the past.”

Ngoenha (2000, 202) points out that “education was the first sector to lose its own autonomy in terms of policy making”. Thus, proposes to rethink the Mozambican educational system in its entirety and in line with the reality of the social fabric, extrapolating the circle of government and international donors. However, it proposes to place it in dialogue with the cultural, economic and political realities, which are its constitutive dimensions, and even if it has the capacity to respond to the improvement of living conditions, to what is attributed “the ambiguous name of development” (Ngoenha 2000, 203).

A coherent educational policy needs to rely on “developmental forces that can intervene”, while being open to spontaneous dynamism so as not to frustrate society’s expectations, including human, cultural, and axiological aspects that must be decided from the interests of societies themselves.

Universities need to be more realistic, more committed to the development of the nation. Programs must face a double challenge: keeping Mozambique in touch with the world’s technical development and responding to the real challenges of Mozambican society (Ngoenha 2000, 218). It is possible to see if this is possible in the face of such deeply antagonistic interests that are in tension in this process.

As we have tried to show, education research can also contribute to the analysis and construction of public education policies more suited to the social, economic and political reality of Mozambique, by examining successful and/or failed initiatives, as well as by identifying obstacles<sup>13</sup> to achieving national objectives in this sector (Cruz e Silva & Osório 2008, 61; Ngoenha 2000).

Research on the state-of-the-art of education research in Mozambique is required, documenting the trajectory of studies and research in education, informing us about trends and alerting us to epistemological limitations and paradoxes (Gamboa 1998).

Finally, research itself should be seen as a way of educating – education through research. Research in education is not an end in itself, it should contribute to the tripod teaching, research and extension. Therefore, it must be critical in order to empower endogenous development models that meet the real needs of societies to bring liberation back to the agenda of history (Mclaren & Farahmandpur 2002).

<sup>13</sup> Such as gender inequalities that constitute a barrier to national development (Cruz e Silva & Osório 2008, 68).

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## ABSTRACT

The word relation suggests a connection, link or bond between one thing and another. In this specific case, this communication proposal intends to discuss the nature of the relationship between education research and socio-economic development from Mozambique. Since independence in 1975, education in Mozambique has been at the top of Governance priorities. Education is seen by the Mozambican government “as a human right and a key instrument for the consolidation of peace, national unity and for the country’s economic, social and political development through the formation of citizens with high self-esteem and patriotic spirit” (Plano Estratégico da Educação 2012, 11). In order for education to assume this role, research in this area is fundamental and can be pursued in two ways: one conducted by government agencies, which serves to evaluate the education system and verify what needs to be improved in terms of infrastructure and teacher training, and the other, carried out by researchers and professionals of education, concerning the production of theoretical knowledge that is applied in the various situations of the educational process. However, both ways are interdependent. This communication will focus on the second path, seeking to reflect around issues such as: what is research in education and what does it consist of or how is it done? What are we talking about when we refer to socio-economic development, in the particular case of Mozambique? When did education and socio-economic development come to be thought of as interconnected and/or interdependent concepts? How can research in education contribute to the development of Mozambique? These questions will be answered based on an analysis of the literature on the subject.

## KEYWORDS

Research in education; socio-economic development; interfaces; Mozambique.

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